

keeping your eyes to yourself by fakelight

Series: [we'll stay where we have gone \[3\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven/Mike Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-10-24

Updated: 2017-10-24

Packaged: 2022-04-02 01:46:31

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,230

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

For one heart-stopping moment, Mike is convinced he hears a crackle of static, signifying some incoming message, a soft, quiet voice just about to say his name.

keeping your eyes to yourself

Author's Note:

This takes place mid-hidden shelters so head on over there if you'd like some context.

It's on the way to third period when Mike finally snaps.

"You're avoiding me!" he exclaims at Dustin, who is (despite Lucas' protestations to the contrary) definitely avoiding him.

"I am not!" Dustin shoots back, but he's looking at the floor as he says it, and Mike wants to grab him and shake him and make him tell him what's going on. (Friends don't lie.)

"It's true," Will points out over his shoulder, a few steps in front of them. "He's avoiding me too."

Mike feels a small sense of triumph.

"He's not avoiding me," Lucas chimes in, which is *not* helping.

"It's *nothing*," Dustin says, exasperated. Mike notices, however, that *nothing* seems to consist of ducking into the bathroom and not showing up to class until after the bell has rung, which means he doesn't get a chance to really grill Dustin until lunch, which is two whole periods later.

"Is it what I said about Luke being lamer than Han? You know it's true."

"No! And no! It's not! Luke is the *hero*—"

Mike cuts him off before he can go on another twenty minute rant. "Then what is it? We have to tell each other stuff, we can't hide things from each other. Not if it's important." Mike notices Will's shoulders hunch up toward his ears, but then Dustin sighs and Mike turns his attention to the matter at hand.

"Fine, you really wanna know? It's—" Dustin shudders, the look on

his face a cross between disgust and confusion. He takes a deep breath. “So there I was, minding my own business, because I was *asleep*, okay? *Asleep*. And I was dreaming that we were having dinner.”

Will and Lucas nod matter-of-factly in acknowledgement of Dustin’s frequent dinner-related dreams. Mike waits impatiently for him to get to the point.

“And it was *us*, you know. All of us, well,” he says, with a guilty look in Mike’s direction, “most of us. El, uh, she wasn’t—”

“Keep going,” Mike bites out.

“And I wanted to talk to you guys, but I couldn’t. So I was stuck listening to everyone else talk around me.”

“This is the most boring dream story you’ve ever told us,” Lucas proclaims.

“I’m not done! And then I realized, I wasn’t dreaming anymore. People were talking. And it was coming from my walkie-talkie.” Dustin pauses, waiting for the anticipation to hit a fever pitch. Mike finds himself leaning in, almost unconsciously.

“And it was *your* sister,” Dustin jerks his head to stare at Mike, then turns his accusatory gaze on Will, “talking to *your* brother.”

Mike pulls back, stunned. “What.”

“Oh my god . . . ” Lucas says, delight creeping across his expression.

“No,” Mike scoffs, his face twisting in confusion, mirroring Dustin’s from earlier. “You picked up someone else.”

“That’s what I thought at first! But it was definitely them!”

“No,” Mike says again. *Nancy*? There’s no way.

“It’s true,” Will says, quietly.

Mike’s mouth literally drops open.

Will shrugs. "I heard it too. I think it's hard for him," he says, his eyes cast down, shoulders hunched even higher. "Them. I don't know." Mike doesn't know what to say. It's hard enough talking around Will's disappearance on a normal day, but when reminders smack them in the face like this, they just have to plow through it.

"Yeah," Lucas muses, slowly. "But Jonathan? I thought she was still dating that douchebag."

"She is." Mike thinks for a second. "But I definitely asked her if she liked Jonathan, you know, back then, and she said it wasn't *like that*. And she was totally lying." He decides not to mention the rest of the conversation, and any lies he may or may not have told on his part. Will unhunches a tiny bit, looking intrigued.

"Anyway," Dustin coughs, focusing their attention on him again, "it woke me up. So what are we going to do about it?"

"Nothing," Will says, fiercely. "Whatever they need to do, I say we let them do it."

Mike looks around, exchanging glances with Lucas, who shakes his head. *Don't push it*, his eyes say.

"But what about me?" Dustin sounds outraged.

"Just tell them to switch their channels. They can have three. Six is ours."

"Switch their *channels*?" Lucas asks. "Do you really think they can handle that?"

Mike suddenly feels strangely protective of his sister. "I'll figure it out. They'll figure it out. They aren't stupid. Three though, okay Will?" Will nods at him.

Dustin raises an eyebrow, clearly unconvinced.

Mike wakes up the next morning to the sound of his bedroom door clicking shut.

When he double checks the location of his walkie-talkie, it's exactly where he left it the night before. Flipped onto the right side, lying on the diagonal, one inch from the edge of his bedside table. Mike can't help but be impressed by Nancy's skills. She could be a spy or something, if the monster hunting doesn't work out.

It takes him ten minutes to find his previous model, almost long enough for him to say screw it and let Nancy continue with her sneaking, but then he remembers Dustin and the thought of his monologue over the lack of sleep he got again last night is enough to keep Mike going.

It's nowhere near as powerful as the one he has now, the one that found Will for them, the one that kept their hopes alive, but Mike feels a strange surge of nostalgia for this once prized item. He remembers the first time he heard Lucas' voice coming over it, both of them seven years old and in awe of the power they held in their hands. Now, in comparison, it's nothing, dented from where he dropped it out of the tree that one time, clunky and obsolete.

He turns it on. It hums to life.

He's tried, a million times, a million different ways. But maybe this time it'll work.

"El?"

For one heart-stopping moment, Mike is convinced he hears a crackle of static, signifying some incoming message, a soft, quiet voice just about to say his name.

But there's nothing.

He knows his attempts are most likely misguided, that Dustin and Lucas are probably right, that she's gone forever, but he clings

stubbornly to the belief that she's out there, somewhere. He just has to find her. That once she's back, once she's home, there won't be any need for late night conversations, not for Nancy or Jonathan, not even for himself. Because even if the only person he's ever trying to talk to at night isn't answering him, well, she will, someday. And then everything will be okay. For all of them. It has to be.

And until then, he'll do what he has to. To bring her home.

Mike tries once more, but the only thing that comes back is static.

He can do this, though. Until she comes back. To do something for his sister, to give her something he doesn't have. That's what he can do. He smirks to himself a little, imagining the look on Nancy's face once she realizes what he knows. He thinks Eleven would too.

"Hang on," he says, his thumb pressing hard on the button. "Just hang on. I'm coming."

Mike waits.

This time, the static seems familiar, somehow. A quick burst.

Mike smiles.

"Over and out."

He turns the walkie-talkie off.

Author's Note:

Title from Overcoats' [Kai's Song](#). Happy Season 2!